

Description of Attached Appendix (total of 36 pages)

Bridges 5,984,156 Nov. 16 1999

Thomson 5,887,709 March 30, 1999

Wildey 5,860,630 Jan 19, 1999

Ackeret 5,823,410 Oct. 20, 1998

Dykstra 5,628,441 May 13, 1997

Sapien 5,326,064 July 5, 1994

Beckerer, Jr 4,508,303 April 2, 1985

Lambert 3,842,981 Oct 22, 1974

Background of the Invention

This invention relates generally to the field of cupholders and more specifically to a holder which holds a container of drinking fluids, collects it's condensation and spilled fluids, and directs them to it's self contained reservoir.

With the increase of the "on the go" mentality there has been a huge demand for more efficient cup holders. The need for an improved cup holder has been magnified by the recent increase in the average number of cup holders per vehicle, golfcart, shopping cart, movie theater chair, wheelchair, etc. Current cup holders do not provide a system for effectively capturing spilled fluids or condensation and storing these fluids separate from the held container for easy cleaning at a later time.

The most widely known cup holders are those found standard in your vehicle dash board or console and do not have a separate area that contains the spills or condensation once they are created. This typically leaves the container sitting in the fluids or fluids can get trapped between the held cup and the holder, or worse, you may end up with the fluid spilled on the dash, console or yourself. Most cup holders do not fit in existing cupholders, do not address the problem of the held container sitting in it's own spilled fluids, do not assist in capturing spilled fluids and are insufficient to handle the different sized drinking cups that are now typical.

Bridges 5,984,156 Nov. 16, 1999 discloses a cup holder which securely holds the container when it is tipped. There is no disclosure of means for evacuating fluids.

Thomson 5,887,709 March 30, 1999 discloses a mug holder with a drainage reservoir (120) that the can or mug sits over and blocks its full utilization, furthermore, it requires a drainage tube because it does not utilize a self contained reservoir.

Wildey 5,860,630 Jan 19, 1999 cannot be used to capture fluids from the held container further a held container can sit in spilled fluids further frustrating its use

Ackeret 5,823,410 Oct. 20, 1998 has no structure at the top of the cup, so as to direct the flow of drippage into the tray, moreover, it does not have the ability to be put in an existing cup holder to improve its use, nor does it lend itself to easy cleaning.

Dykstra 5,628,441 May 13, 1997 discloses another type of container holder with offset overlapping recesses of different diameters and depth. There is no disclosure of a reservoir for catching spills.

Sapien 5,326,064 July 5, 1994 has no structure for directing spills into the reservoir. Further, when in position, the cup blocks the bottom reservoir and, worse, when the cup is raised out of the holder, it necessarily pulls the liquid from the reservoir with it, to some extent, and disperses the liquid out of the reservoir, thereby frustrating its function. With Sapien's holding cup holder the size of the cup being held determines what height it will sit in the cupholder allowing the held cup to sit in the bottom of the reservoir, further frustrating its function.

Beckerer, Jr 4,508,303 April 2, 1985 cup holder does not fit in existing cupholders, moreover, there is no structure at the top of the holder to catch spilled fluids. Furthermore, there is no structure to keep the held container above the bottom of the holder, most importantly it requires a drain tube to keep the spilled fluids away from the held container.

Lambert 3,842,981 Oct 22, 1974 requires many large parts in order for it to function, these parts will not fit in most cars, and never in an existing cup holder. Further, the reservoir is not self contained within the cup holder.

Brief Summary of the Invention

The primary object of the invention is to provide a holder with a upper rim, that is taller than the container being held, to help catch and direct spills from the held container.

Another object of the invention is to provide a holder that has a centered vertical upright column within it that supports the held container and allows the captured fluids to be stored around its base away from the held container while also providing a means to insert a weight or magnet into its open bottom end for more stability or floatation.

Another object of the invention is to provide a holder that reduces spills by containing the entire height of the held container utilizing its upper funnel and support fins.

A further object of the invention is to provide a holder that has a reservoir within it that stores the captured fluids of the held container separate from the held container.

Yet another object of the invention is to provide a holder that purposely collects dripping condensation from the container being held and stores it separate from the held container in it's self contained reservoir.

Still yet another object of the invention is to provide a better holder by making it portable for easy removal, transfer, and cleaning.

Another object of the invention is to provide a easily cleaned holder by making it portable and dishwasher safe.

Another object of the invention is to provide a holder that holds a large variety of container sizes and still performs it's function.

A further object of the invention is to provide a holder that reduces spills in the interior of your vehicle by trapping spilling fluids with its upper rim and directing them to its self contained reservoir.

Yet another object of the invention is to provide a holder that can fit in most existing cup holders and improve their function.

Still yet another object of the invention is to provide a new means for advertising.

Another object of the invention is to provide a holder that has all the above stated benefits and can be manufactured in one piece for ease in manufacturing and reduced cost.

Other objects and advantages of the present invention will become apparent from the following descriptions, taken in connection with the accompanying drawings, wherein, by way of illustration and example, an embodiment of the present invention is disclosed.

In accordance with a preferred embodiment of the invention, there is disclosed a holder which holds a container of drinking fluids, collects it's condensation and spilled fluids, and directs them to it's self contained reservoir comprising: a holder with a upper rim that is taller than the container being held which collects spilled fluids, a holder that contains the entire height of the held container utilizing its upper funnel and support ribs creating more room to access the held container while further allowing the spilled fluids to pass into the reservoir , a holder which stores spilled fluids and condensation within it's own self contained reservoir, a self contained reservoir created from a centered vertical support column which provides support to the held container and creates an area to add weight, a magnet, or lighting to its bottom open end, a holder that directs

spilled fluids and condensation into its self contained reservoir utilizing its upper and lower funnel system, a holder that can fit in existing cup holders and improve their function, a holder that is portable and machine washable, and A holder that can provide the above stated benefits and be manufactured in one piece.

In accordance with a preferred embodiment of the invention, there is disclosed the holder of claim 1 which utilizes a upper rim that is taller than the container being held to capture condensation and spilled fluids.

In accordance with a preferred embodiment of the invention, there is disclosed the holder of claim 1 which provides support to a held containers entire height utilizing its upper funnel and support rib combination thus creating more room to access the held container while further allowing the spilled fluids to pass below ,

In accordance with a preferred embodiment of the invention, there is disclosed the holder of claim 1 which provides a self contained reservoir created from a centered vertical support column which provides support to the held container separate from the containers spilled fluids furthermore creating an area to add weight, a magnet, or lighting by insertion in its open bottom end,

Brief Description of the Drawings

The drawings constitute a part of this specification and include exemplary embodiments to the invention, which may be embodied in various forms. It is to be understood that in some instances various aspects of the invention may be shown exaggerated or enlarged to facilitate an understanding of the invention.

Figure <1> is a cross sectional view taken along lines 1---1 of FIG 2

Figure <2> is a plan view looking at the top of the holder.

Figure <3> is a cross sectional view (same as FIG. 1) taken along lines 1--1 of FIG 2 shown with a container held in position.

Figure <4> is a perspective view from a top side advantage

Figure <5> is a perspective view from a bottom side advantage

Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments

Detailed descriptions of the preferred embodiment are provided herein. It is to be understood, however, that the present invention may be embodied in various forms. Therefore, specific details disclosed herein are not to be interpreted as limiting, but rather as a basis for the claims and as a representative basis for teaching one skilled in the art to employ the present invention in virtually any appropriately detailed system, structure or manner.

In one embodiment of the invention (fig 1) there is provided a holder (10) that holds a drinking container, that is portable and machine washable, comprising of an upper rim (12) taller than the container being held, several support ribs (14) arrayed about its upper funnel (16) this connected to the lower funnel (18) by means of generally cylindrical wall (20).

The lower section (22) has an open first end (24) and an opposite second end (26) and is formed by means of generally cylindrical wall (28). Contained within the lower section (22) rising from the bottom end (26) of the holder (10) is a centered vertical support column (30) standing approximately 1 inch tall thus creating the self contained reservoir (32) about its base.

As seen in (figure 3) there is a held container (34) that is placed in a holder (10) resting its lower end (36) on the centered vertical support column (30) as its upper end (44) comes to rest upon the support rib (14) restraining the held container (34) from any

movements while still allowing fluids to pass to the said holders (10) self contained reservoir (32) which stores spilled fluids and condensation for later easy cleaning. To accomplish an important function of the invention there is shown the upper rim (12) generally a cylindrical surface that extends above the held container (34). Below this, in accordance with an important feature of this invention is the upper funnel (16) in combination with the support ribs (14) which provide support to the full height of the container while also providing passage to condensation and spilled fluids from the held container (34) to the self contained reservoir (32) in the base of the lower section (22).

Upon further inspection of (figure 1) it will be seen that the upper rim (12) has an open end with a diameter of approximately 5.4 inches leading down to the upper funnel (16) with a top diameter of approximately 5.1 inches and a bottom diameter of approximately 3.6 inches. The upper funnel (16) contains several support ribs (14) arrayed evenly around the entire circumference of the said upper funnel (16) allows you to better access the held container while allowing fluids to pass. These support ribs are approximately 0.125 inch's thick extending out from the upper funnel, thus providing support to the held container (34) while also allowing fluids to readily move to the lower section (22) and collect in the holder's (10) self contained reservoir (32) separate from the held container (34).

In a preferred embodiment the fluids traveling inside the apparatus cylindrical inner surface (20), which has a diameter of approximately 3.5 inches directs fluids to the bottom funnel comprising of an upper open end with a diameter of approximately 3.5 inches and a lower open end with a diameter of approximately 3 inches leading to what

will be considered the lower section (22). The lower section (22) comprising of a generally cylindrical surface approximately 2 inches in height and 3 inches in diameter houses a vertical support column (30) extending upwardly from the bottom end (26) of the holder (10) standing approximately 1 inch tall and approximately 1.4 inches in diameter thus creating a platform (38) to support a held container (34) and creating a reservoir (32) about its base, while further creating a open hollow area inside (40) with a closed top end (38) and an open bottom end (42) which can be used to house a weight, magnet, or lighting

While the invention has been described in connection with a preferred embodiment, it is not intended to limit the scope of the invention to the particular form set forth, but on the contrary, it is intended to cover such alternatives, modifications, and equivalents such as a holder that can hold multiple containers, a holder with a lid, or a holder that can be adjustable, as may be included within the spirit and scope of the invention as defined by the appended claims.

Title of the Invention

An artical of manufacture which holds a container of drinking fluids, collects it's condensation and spilled fluids, and directs them to it's self contained reservoir

Cross Reference to Related Applications

Bridges 5,984,156 Nov. 16 1999 discloses a cup holder which securely holds the container when it is tipped

Thomson 5,887,709 March 30, 1999 discloses a cupholder with a drain for spilled fluid.

Wildey 5,860,630 Jan 19,1999 discloses a stackable beverage holder

Ackeret 5,823,410 Oct. 20, 1998 discloses a cupholder with a reservoir for draining spilled fluid

Dykstra 5,628,441 May 13, 1997 discloses another type of container holder.

Sapien 5,326,064 July 5, 1994 discloses a cup holder with a reservoir 22 for holding spills.

Beckerer, Jr 4,508,303 April 2, 1985 discloses a cupholder with a reservoir for draining spilled fluid

Lambert 3,842,981 Oct 22, 1974 discloses a cup holder with reservoir for holding spilled fluid.

Statement Regarding Federally Sponsored Research or Development

Not Applicable

An artical of manufacture which holds a container of drinking fluids, collects it's condensation and spilled fluids, and directs them to it's self contained reservoir

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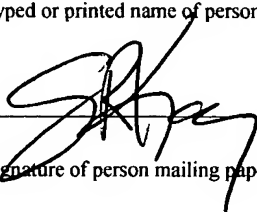
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